

Unit 7B

PsychSim 5: MY HEAD IS SPINNING

Name: _____

Section: _____

Date: _____

This activity provides some background information about thinking with verbal concepts versus thinking with mental images.

Conceptual Thinking

- What was your train of thought as you navigated the picture of the candle?

Cooper & Shepard's Results

- In the Cooper & Shepard experiment (1973), participants were asked to decide whether a stimulus (a letter) was normal (simply rotated in the picture plane) or backwards (flipped to its mirror image before the rotation). Reaction times were graphed and increased as the letters were rotated away from 0 degrees. Interestingly, reaction time decreased after 180 degrees. Can you explain why this might occur?

Mental Rotation Experiment

- After completing the Mental Rotation experiment and viewing your data, how would you describe the pattern of your results? Do you think that your results fit the pattern of results from the Shepard experiments?
- After comparing the graphs of your results and the results of the Cooper & Shepard (1973) study, how similar are the two graphs? Did your results show a clear increase in reaction time as the orientation moved away from the vertical? Did your results show a decrease in reaction time as the orientation moved from 180 degrees back to the vertical?